



NAKHON RATCHASIMA

(KHORAT)

The city of various Khmer ruins and the famous statue of Khun Ying Mo named Nakhon Ratchasima or commonly known as "Khorat" is situated on a plateau, about 260 kilometres northeast of Bangkok. The city itself serves as the gateway to the Northeastern region.

How to get to Nakhon Ratchasima

By car : Taking Highway No.1 passing Don Muang Airport, Wang Noi, till arriving Saraburi. At Saraburi, turn right along Highway No.2 which finally leads to Nakhon Ratchasima. The total distance of this route is 259 kilometres.

By Bus : There are both air and non air-conditioned buses leaving from the Northeastern Bus Terminal. Non air-conditioned buses leave every 15 minutes from 05.20-10.15 hrs., and air-conditioned buses leave every minutes, starting from 04.00-23.30 hrs. For further information tel : 936-0667

By Train : Trains leave Bangkok Railway Station (Hua Lamphong) many times daily. For further information please call 223-7010, 223-7020.

By Plane : Thai Airways operates daily flights to Nakhon Ratchasima. Call 280-0060 for further information.

ATTRACTIONS

Monument of Thao Suranari (อนุสาวรีย์ท้าวสุรนารี) or Khun Ying Mo is situated in front of the old gate of "Pratu Chumphon" on the west side of the city. This monument was erected in 1934 to commemorate the heroic deed of Khun Ying Mo, wife of the deputy Governor of Khorat during the reign of King RAMA III, who managed to save the city from the invasion of the Laotian army led by Prince Anuwong of Vientiane. Every year from March 23 to April 3, there is a celebration to honour this statue which draws thousands of people from town and neighbouring provinces.



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Wat Phra Narai Maharat (วัดพระนารายณ์มหาราช) on Prachak road houses an image of Narayana (Hindu God) made of sand stone. This statue is considered the major sacred of the city. The City Pillar is also enshrined in this temple.

Maha Wirawong National Museum (พิพิธภัณฑ์สถานแห่งชาติมหาวิรุวงศ์) opposite the city hall, exhibits various arts objects and artifacts donated to Somdet Maha Wirawong such as sand stone Buddha images, different sizes ceramics and wood carvings from ancient monasteries. Open everyday except Mondays and Tuesdays from 9.00-16.00 hrs.

Wat Sala Loi (วัดศาลาลอย) is located on the bank of Lam Takhong River, about 400 meters off the side-road to the Northeast of the town. The main chapel, which received many awards from various architectural associations as a modern leading design of religious monument, is constructed in the shape of Chinese Junk.

Lam Takhong Dam (เขื่อนลำตะคอง) lies 62 kilometres before reaching the town on Highway No. 2. The construction had started in 1964 and finished 4 years later. The lake-like reservoir can contain up to 300 million cu.m. of water and irrigates 238,000 rais of paddy field.

Khao Yai National Park (อุทยานแห่งชาติเขาใหญ่) at Km. 165.5 on Highway No. 2 covers an area of 2,168 sq.km. in four provinces: Nakhon Ratchasima, Nakhon Nayok, Sara Buri, and Prachin Buri. The Park comprises various mountains, two important rivers of Lam Takhon and Nakhon Nayok, with many rare species of fauna and flora and over 20 waterfalls. Accommodations near the national park are available.

Wat Khao Chan Ngam (วัดเขาจันทร์งาม) is 58 kilometers from Khorat on Highway No. 2 and 3 kilometers on a side road after turning left at Km. 198. The monastery is famous from the pre-historic colour paintings on a huge rock depicting human and animal figures in various movements. It can be dated to about 3,000 years ago.

Khorat Ancient Town (เมืองเก่าโคราช), an ancient town of Khmer period, is located some 32 kilometres southwest of Nakhon Ratchasima on the way to Amphoe Sung Noen with 3 kilometres right turn at Wat Yan Sophit Wanaram. The ruins comprise Prasat Hin Non Ku, Prasat hin Muang Khaek and Prasat Hin Muang Kao which have been already restored.

Wat Thammachak Semaram (วัดธรรมจักรเสมาราม) , located 4 kilometers from Amphoe Sung Noen, houses a Reclining Buddha image made of red sand stone which is the most ancient and largest in Thailand. The image is assumed to be built since 1,200 BE. there

are various evidences of archaeology found within the area such as bronze Buddha images, Buddha terra-cotta printing images, glass beads and inscribing stone.

Ban Prasat Archaeological Site (แหล่งโบราณคดีบ้านปราสาท) is 42 kilometers away from Nakhon Ratchasima along the Nakhon Ratchasima - Khon Kaen route. Skeletons, ornaments, and artifacts and potteries were discovered here. It is presumed that this area has continuously been inhabited during the past 3,000 years up to present.

Prasat Hin Phimai (ปราสาทหินพิมาย) is the largest sandstone sanctuary in Thailand almost situated in the center of Phimai Ancient city which carries a rectangular shape of 665 meters wide and 1,030 meters long. The Sanctuary has been magnificently restored and renovated ruins and has been preserved as a National Historical Park.

The principal sanctuary is a tower (Prasat) surrounded by four porches with an ante-chamber leading into each porch. On the terraces of the pyramidal roof, which is supported by Garudas, guardian figures, are interspersed with Nagas.

Of special interest is a carved stone door-lintel depicting a divine figure, dressed in an elephant skin worn upside down, who dances on a pair of prostrate figures, on either side of this figure are rows of seated Buddha images dressed in royal attire, while below them are rows of dancing celestial figures.

Also on the way to Phimai is the **Phimai National Museum** (พิพิธภัณฑสถานแห่งชาติพิมาย) housing valuable historical objects and archaeological remains found in the region.

Other Khmer ruins within Nakhon Ratchasima include **Prasat Hin Phanom Wan** (ปราสาทหินพนมวัน) located about 20 kilometres from town, **Prasat Hin Nang Ram** (ปราสาทหินนางรำ) some 80 kilometres northeast of Khorat in Amphoe Prathai, **Prang Ban Ku** (ปรางค์บ้านคู) and **Prang Sida** (ปรางค์สีดา), all of which are similar to Phimai ruins but somewhat smaller.

Sai Ngam (ไทรงาม) or "Beautiful Banyan Tree" is two kilometres from Phimai. It is a recreation place which provides more than 15,000 square feet of shady area. Food stands for snacks and drink are also available.

Dan Kwian (บ้านด่านเกวียน) situated on Highway No.24, about 14 kilometers from the city of Nakhon Ratchasima is a village noted for the unique pottery widely used for interior and outdoor decoration. The clay at Dan Kwian has a specially marvellous quality of tough,

ductile texture and the color of rust which are beyond comparison and the quantity is fantastic. Such clay cannot be found anywhere else but Dan Kwian and when added with proper heating process and attractive design, the earthenwares are irresistible.

Nakhon Ratchasima Zoo (สวนสัตว์นครราชสีมา) About 13 kilometers from town along the Khorat-Pak Thong Chai route, covers a vast stretch of land comprising a reservoir and habitation areas for animals amidst the surrounding nearest to their natural environment. Open daily between 8.30-16.30 hrs.

Amphoe Pak Thong Chai (อำเภอปากช่องชัย) itself is also noted for its finest silk. The town is situated about 32 kilometres from Nakhon Ratchasima along Highway No.304

Wat Na Phra That (วัดหน้าพระธาตุ) is located four kilometres from the Pak Thong Chai District Office. The temple has an old chapel in which beautiful mural paintings of the Early Rattanakosin period can be seen on the walls. The door of "Ho Trai" or the hall for keeping the scripture is also elaborately carved.

Major Event

Phimai Boat Racing (งานประเพณีแข่งเรือพิมาย) an annual festival held for over a hundred years in Amphoe Phimai, now takes place during Loi Kratong Festival (October or November), draws thousands of tourists both from Khorat city and neighbouring provinces.

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